

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 064158
ORIGIN SS-15

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /016 R

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DRAFTED BY IO/UNP:RLBARRY

APPROVED BY IO/SA:TBROWN

S/S:DCAMP

-----094615 140041Z /75

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE 0000

S E C R E T STATE 064158

EXDIS

FOL RPT MOGADISCIO 0509 ACTION SECSTATE 13 MAR 78 QUOTE

S E C R E T MOGADISCIO 0509

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-3

TAGS: PBOR, MOPS, SO, ET, UR

SUBJ: PERPLEXITIES ON THE HORN

REF: STATE 063496

1. SIAD IS CONCERNED OVER THE MILITARY AND POLITICAL SITUATION, BUT HE IS ALSO PERPLAXED BY WHAT HE SEES AS CONFUSING SIGNALS FROM THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT. AS I ATTEMPTED TO POINT OUT EARLIER, SIAD IS LOOKING FOR A TANGIBLE SIGN OF US SUPPORT, A SIGN OF GOOD WILL THAT HE CAN SHOW TO HIS PEOPLE. IN RETURN FOR HIS AGREEMENT TO WITHDRAW, HE CLEARLY UNDERSTANDS WE INTRODUCED NEW CONDITIONS TO THE OFFER TO SUPPLY DEFENSIVE ARMS. UNTIL HE HAS A MORE POSITIVE SIGNAL FROM US, DI DO NOT EXPECR HE WILL

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EVINCE MUCH ENTHUSIASM FOR ANY OF THE DIPLOMATIC OR ECONOMIC MEASURES WE HAVE PROPOSED, OR ARE IN THE PROCESS OF IMPLEMENTING. ON THE OTHER HAND HE HAS NOT OPPOSED THESE ACTIONS, AND I DOUBT HE WILL DO SO. I BELIEVE HE IS SCEPTICAL, BUT IF THE UNSC CAN PRODUCE A CEASEFIRE, AND MANDATES OBSERVERS TO PREVENT RETRIBUTION AND OVERSEE THE WITHDRAWAL, I THINK THERE IS A GOOD CHANCE HE WILL GO ALONG WITH IT. I RECOMMEND,

THEREFORE, THAT WE PROCEED VIGOROUSLY IN THE UNITED NATIONS
ALONG THE LINES SET FORTH IN STATE 063447.

2. FROM ALL INDICATIONS AVAILABLE TO ME, SIAD'S REMARKS
ABOUT THE SMOOTH WITHDRAWAL IN THE SOUTH ARE ACCURATE.
WE RECHECKED WITH OUR MOST DEPENDABLE INDEPENDENT SOURCE
THIS MORNING, AND HE WAS ABLE TO ADD INFORMATION THAT THE
DECISION TO WITHDRAW IN THE SOUTH WAS ACTUALLY TAKEN
BEFORE SIAD'S TRIP TO LIBYA. OUR SOURCE FELT THE SITUA-
TION IN THE NORTH MORE DIFFICULT, AND REPEATED HIS EARLIER
CONCLUSION THAT UNITS THERE FACED CORRESPONDINGLY TOUGHER
PROBLEMS IN EXFILTRATING THEMSELVES. OUR SOURCE ADDED
THAT THE SOMALIS HAVE SOME FORMER AIR DEFENSE UNITS, AND
SOME TANKS THAT WERE OFF THE LINES FOR REPAIR, NOW IN
POSITION IN KEY AREAS ALONG THE NORTHERN BORDER, AND WOULD
AT LEAST BE ABLE TO CONTEST A CROSSING. HE ADDED THAT
THEY MIGHT NOT BE ABLE TO HOLD FOR VERY LONG IN THE FACE
OF A DETERMINED DRIVE. I THINK THAT IS A REASONABLE PIC-
TURE OF THE MILITARY SITUATION ON THE GROUND. AT ONE
POINT IN THE CONVERSATION YESTERDAY, SIAD SEEMED TO BE
SAYING THAT THE CUBANS AND SOVIETS WERE NOT PUSHING THEIR
MILITARY ADVANTAGE. WHEN REQUESTED HE RETRACTED THAT
POINT, BUT I AM NOT CONVINCED THAT THE FIRST WAS NOT
ACCURATE. IN OTHER WORDS, I SUSPECT PERHAPS THE CUBANS
AND SOVIETS, THEIR PURPOSE ACCOMPLISHED, ARE NOT BEING
AS BLOODTHIRSTY AS THEIR HOSTS WOULD LIKE THEM TO BE.

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3. LET ME TOUCH ON REFUGEES SINCE THAT SUBJECT WAS
MENTIONED IN REFTEL. SIAD TOLD ME THERE ARE THOUSANDS OF
REFUGEES CROSSING INTO SOMALIA. HE SAID THERE ARE NOW
50,000 IN THE HARGEISA AREA, AND ABOUT 30,000 NEAR
BORAMA WITH OTHERS AT INDETERMINATE POINTS ALONG THE
BORDER. SIAD SAID A GSDR COMMITTEE HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED
TO ERECT CAMPS AND PROVIDE RELIEF FOR THESE PEOPLE, BUT
HE MADE NO APPEAL FOR ASSISTANCE. I REMINDED HIM WE
WOULD BE RESPONSIVE TO HUMANITARIAN NEEDS.

4. I HOPE THAT I HAVE ADEQUATELY ANSWERED THE TWO QUES-
TIONS POSED IN REFTEL. THAT BEING SAID, I DO NOT THINK
THIS MESSAGE WOULD BE COMPLETE WITHOUT SOME OBSERVATIONS
ON OUR POSITION IN SOMALIA. IT HAS DETERIORATED, AND
THE TREND CONTINUES TO BE NEGATIVE. I HAVE TRIED IN
PREVIOUS MESSAGES TO EXPLAIN WHY SIAD DOES NOT THINK AS
WE DO. HIS FRAME OF REFERENCE ALONE WOULD BE SUFFICIENT
UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES TO CAUSE DIFFICULTIES. IN THE
PRESENT CONTEXT, HOWEVER, I MUST CONFESS I UNDERSTAND AT
LEAST SOME OF HIS CONFUSION REGARDING OUR BILATERAL RELA-
TIONSHIP. I AM MINDFUL THAT HE IS ATTEMPTING TO EXTRACT

FROM US THE MAXIMUM HE CAN HOPE TO GET. WHAT HE OBVIOUSLY WANTS MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE IS THE PROMISE OF MILITARY HARDWARE, BUT I BELIEVE HE REGARDS THIS AS A FADING HOPE. IF DEFENSIVE ARMS ARE ATTAINABLE, THEN I BELIEVE HE WILL GO ALONG WITH ALMOST ANY OTHER PROPOSITION WE PUT TO HIM, AND WITH ENTHUSIASM. YESTERDAY HE IMPLIED HE WAS PREPARED TO GO SO FAR AS TO STEP DOWN -- FOR A SUCCESSOR HE WOULD NAME -- IF THE USG FELT IT NECESSARY THAT A MORE CONGENIAL LEADER HEAD THE GSDR. I BELIEVE THAT WAS ROLE PLAYING, AS WERE OTHER PORTIONS OF HIS REMARKABLY RELAXED PERFORMANCE. BUT I DO BELIEVE WE ARE GOING TO HAVE SIAD BARRE TO DEAL WITH FOR AT LEAST THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE IN SOMALIA.

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5. WHETHER OR NOT I HAVE MADE MY POSITION CLEAR, I URGE THE DEPARTMENT TO AUTHORIZE MY RETURN FOR CONSULTATION. I THINK THIS WOULD BE A USEFUL STEP FOR A NUMBER OF REASONS. I NEED A BETTER GRASP OF OUR PROPOSED COURSE ON THE HORN THAN I NOW HAVE IN ORDER TO BEST CARRY OUT MY MISSION. I DON'T THINK THERE IS ANYMORE I CAN USEFULLY CONVEY TO SIAD IN THE NEXT FEW DAYS. I BELIEVE THAT MY EXPERIENCES REPORTED FIRST HAND TO THE DEPARTMENT WOULD BE USEFUL IN CONCERTING OUR POLICIES. I PROPOSE THE CONSULTATION BE BRIEF, AND AM PREPARED TO DEPART ON THE 15TH IF AGREEABLE.

6. I HAVE NOT REPEATED THIS MESSAGE TO THE REFTEL ADDRESSEES IN VIEW OF MY REQUEST FOR CONSULTATIONS. THE DEPT MAY WISH, HOWEVER, TO REPEAT THE FIRST FOUR PARAGRAPHS.
LOUGHRAN

UNQUOTE VANCE

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, POLITICAL CONCESSIONS, INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION, MUTUAL FORCE WITHDRAWALS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 13 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE064158
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: RLBARRY
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X3
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780112-0216
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780374/aaaackwq.tel
Line Count: 154
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 0c3c74c8-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 78 STATE 63496
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 31 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3349218
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PERPLEXITIES ON THE HORN
TAGS: PBOR, MOPS, PEPR, SO, ET, UR, US
To: USUN NEW YORK
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/0c3c74c8-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014